

NETWORKING



MORAVIAN
COLLEGE

CAREER & CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT

CENTER FOR CAREER & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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Center Drop-in Hours: Monday-Thursday: 2-4pm



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WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT NETWORKING?

Why is Networking Important?

"Not only can you use networking to find jobs, but the information you learn through networking can help you craft your resume appropriately and give you an edge in the interview."

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Many jobs will never even be posted online. The more varied and wider your network, the more you'll learn of new opportunities. Friends, family, previous employers, classmates, faculty, and alumni can all be great sources of information. Connect with alumni and make sure to stay abreast of networking opportunities and events. The Center for Career and Civic Engagement offers a host of different networking opportunities throughout the academic year, such as our Job & Internship Fair in the spring semester, as well as the Career Connections Externship Program during the winter break!

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS AND EXTERNSHIPS

Some definitions: An informational interview is an interview that you initiate. The purpose is to obtain information rather than to get a job. Informational interviewing is done to gather key information about careers and to make connections with individuals in those careers. Informational interviewing is gathering information that will help you in your career choice. This type of interviewing can be informal and done in person, or even via phone or online (Skype, Zoom, etc).

Externships (or job shadowing) are a way to gather the same information while also spending the day (or three) with a professional in his/her/their workplace. Dressing in that industry's dress code is typically required and this is an experience you can list on your resume.

Reasons to Conduct Informational Interviews/Complete Externships

- To explore careers and clarify your career goal.
- To discover employment opportunities that are not advertised.
- To expand your professional network.
- To build confidence for later job interviews.
- To access the most up-to-date career information.
- To identify your professional strengths and weaknesses.

Note: This process is educational in nature. While opportunities can arise from these connections (and often do), it is not a time to ask for a job or internship!

Questions

Prepare a list of your own questions for your informational interview/externship.

- On a typical day in this position, what do you do?
- What training or education is required for this type of work? Are there basic prerequisites beyond education and training (e.g., certification, qualifying exams, etc.)?
- What personal qualities or abilities are important to being successful in this job?
- What part of this job do you find most satisfying? most challenging?
- How did you get your job?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
- How do you see jobs in this field changing in the future?
- Is there a demand for people in this occupation?
- What special advice would you give a person entering this field?
- What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
- Which professional journals or organizations would help me learn more about this field?
- With the information you have about my education, skills, and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?
- Would you be willing to take a look at my résumé and make suggestions for improvement?
- Who do you know that I should also talk to? When I call him/her/them, may I use your name?

Informational Interviewing Steps

1. Identify the Occupation or Industry You Wish to Learn About

Assess your own interests, abilities, values, and skills, and evaluate labor conditions and trends to identify the best fields to research.

2. Prepare for the Interview

Read all you can about the field prior to the interview. Decide what information you would like to obtain about the occupation/industry. Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.

3. Identify People to Interview

Start with lists of people you already know - friends, relatives, fellow students, present or former co-workers, supervisors, neighbors, etc... Professional organizations, LinkedIn, and organizational directories are also good resources. You may also call an organization and ask for the name of the person by job title. Be sure to make an appointment with a staff member of the Center for Career and Civic Engagement to assist your search for potential alumni in your areas of interest.

4. Arrange the Interview

Contact the person to set up an interview: by phone, by email followed by a phone call, or by having someone who knows the person assist you in this process.

5. Conduct the Interview

Dress appropriately (if meeting the person face-to-face), arrive or call on time, be polite and professional. Refer to your list of prepared questions; stay on track, but allow for spontaneous discussion. Be sure to ask your contact to suggest names of others who might be helpful to you and ask permission to use your contact's name when contacting these new contacts.

6. Follow Up

Immediately following the interview, record the information gathered. Be sure to send a thank-you note to your contact within 48 hours of the interview.